

# The Base of a Jar: What It Can Tell Us

By Barry L. Bernas

Many jars used by food packers had an ornate, outer motif. Unlike fruit jars, most didn't show any embossing on the front to identify the maker or seller. The clues to determining the manufacturer, marketer or both and when it was made were often found on the base of the container.

Figure 1



The jar in Figure 1 is from the Capstan Glass Company. It was formed to the design patent issued to one of its employees, Louis P. Piazzoli, Jr. Only one of many sizes made by Capstan workers, it was advertised for sale from December

1928 until at least June 1935.

Figure 2



How did I find these facts? The hints came from the base of the jar in Figure 1 shown in Figure 2. In the center is the trademark of the Capstan Glass Company. Around the edge is embossed PAT. NOV. 23, 26. A trip to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and then the Library of Congress garnered the other factual information stemming from this date.

Figure 3



Additional proof of this jar's production period came from Figures 3 and 4. The mold cavity number 5403 affirms all three jars were the same style. The evolution of the base markings from a date, to the abbreviation PATD, and then to no wording at all confirms, at least to me, that this unit was made for a considerable period. The ad information from the trip confirmed my observations.

Figure 4



As you can see, the base of this unembossed jar gave us considerable background from the clues embossed thereon.

---

*See the author's Capstan Display at our March 7 Show.*